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March 28, 2013

To: House Land Use Committee
State Capitol, 900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: HB 3384

Dear Chair Clem and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to present testimony on HB 3384. 1000 Friends of Oregon is a nonprofit, membership organization that works with Oregonians to support livable urban and rural communities, protect family farms and forests, and provide transportation and housing choice. While 1000 Friends does not support the bill as proposed, we believe there are other ways in which the needs of veterans for affordable and safe support centers and housing can and should be met.

HB 3384 would authorize the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) to issue permits for establishment of facilities to serve or support veterans on land donated to a public body or nonprofit organization. This would turn LCDC into a permitting agency, a role it does not and never has had. LCDC issuing permits for the location of individual facilities would establish a very different relationship between local governments and the state agency than exists today.

In addition, locating veterans' facilities based on where land is donated might not make sense in terms of being centrally located to meet the need of the widest number of veterans. These types of facilities should be located where they are accessible by transit or walking, and that is an appropriate element for cities to incorporate into their approval processes.

There may well be unnecessary local obstacles to the location of veterans' facilities and housing. 1000 Friends believes that the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) can do more to both require and encourage cities to remove obstacles to safe, affordable housing for all, including veterans and others who often face housing insecurity. That is why we support HB 2890, which would enable cities to craft inclusionary housing polices. In addition, institutions such as schools, veterans' centers, and facilities for other populations often face similar obstacles to locating in appropriate neighborhoods, as does affordable housing. We would support the legislature directing DLCD to be more aggressive in seeing that local governments remove unreasonable barriers to these types of facilities and housing. However, we do believe that the permitting authority appropriately rests with local governments, which is why we do not support HB 3384.

Thank you for consideration of our testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Kyle McCurdy".

Mary Kyle McCurdy
Policy Director